

## SMSgt (Ret.) Rob Rosenberger

Twitter @rsnbrgr

This PDF / ZIP / folder / \_\_\_\_\_ contains first-generation scans and/or photographs of original UNCLASSIFIED historical papers in the public domain stored in the Air Force Historical Research Agency at Maxwell AFB, Alabama. SMSgt (Ret.) Rob Rosenberger accessioned the enclosed document(s) into his personal collection and he donates this effort to the PUBLIC DOMAIN.

EO 12958: 13 JAN 1975 My accession: 12 OCT 2021 Initials: TR

Title: B-47 ENDURANCE/DISTANCE RECORD FLIGHT, A/C  
43D BOMB WING/CC COL, DAVID A. BURCHINAL

Date(s): 17-19 NOVEMBER 1954

Call: K-WG-43-SU-RE

Volume: N/A

☐ ALL ☒ Selected Papers ☐ Except

FRONT MATTER; PART 1, "TESTIMONIALS" IAW UCMJ ART. 31

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



HEADQUARTERS  
UNITED STATES EUROPEAN COMMAND  
Office of the Deputy Commander-in-Chief  
APO NEW YORK 09128

IN REPLY REFER TO

30 July 1970

7-4431 SW

Office of Air Force History  
Forrestal Bldg.  
1000 Independence Ave., S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20024

Gentlemen:

On 19 November 1954, my Wing Standardization Board Crew and I completed a flight of 47 hours and 35 minutes in a tactically configured B-47 aircraft. This flight set a new endurance and distance record at the time and I have kept in my possession all records pertaining to it.

I am enclosing them herewith in the hope they may be of some historical value which appropriate archives might care to preserve.

Sincerely,

DAVID A. BURCHINAL  
General USAF  
Deputy Commander in Chief

1 Incl  
File - 47:35 hour  
flight - B-47E  
52-062

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE  
HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES AIR FORCE  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20330



7-4431 SW

5 August 1970

General David A. Burchinal  
Dep CinC, US European Comd  
APO New York 09128

Dear Dave

The documents pertaining to your 1954 B-47 endurance flight which you mailed to my office on 30 July have been received and my thanks for letting us have them.

I enjoyed reading your flight testimony and congratulate you on a masterful job of interpreting the then pertinent regulations and policies.

We will send the complete file to our Archives repository at Maxwell where it will be indexed and referenced and available for scholarly research.

Sincerely

*R. A. Grussendorf*  
R. A. GRUSSENDORF  
Major General, USAF  
Chief, Office of Air Force History



I N D E X

1. Part I (Testimonies)
2. Part II (Aircraft Inspection and Maintenance Record)
3. Part III (Reports on Flight of B-47E 52-062)



SECRET

TESTIMONY OF COLONEL DAVID A. BURCHINAL, USAF

Given to William B. Campbell, Colonel, USAF, Investigating Officer, Headquarters, 7th Air Division, APO 125, New York, New York, at Headquarters, 3919th Air Base Group, APO 129, New York, New York, 20 November 1954.

Having been duly sworn and advised of his rights under Article 31 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice, the witness testified as follows:

- 1Q Would you please state your name, rank and serial number as well as your position in the 43d Bomb Wing?
- A David A. Burchinal, Colonel, USAF, 1936A, Commander of the 43d Bomb Wing.
- 2Q How long have you been with the 43d Bomb Wing?
- A I assumed command on 4 January 1954.
- 3Q Approximately when did you arrive in the United Kingdom?
- A 5 September 1954.
- 4Q Then you have been with your wing during its entire period of TDY except for occasional TDY trips?
- A That is correct.
- 5Q When did you last fly?
- A I landed yesterday shortly after noon.
- 6Q Where had you been?
- A North Africa.
- 7Q When did you depart for North Africa?
- A I departed on Tuesday morning for North Africa.
- 8Q Prior to your departure did you inform anyone in higher headquarters — namely, Headquarters, 7th Air Division — that you planned to be absent from the organization?
- A Yes, I called Colonel Seawell, Deputy Commander, that I was going to North Africa and would be gone until approximately Friday.
- 9Q Friday what date?
- A Yesterday. Friday, the 19th. I informed him that Colonel Marts would be in Lakenheath during this period and that Colonel Miller would be in charge here and that if anything arose calling for Colonel Marts' attention he was just fifty minutes away and could get back quite easily. Colonel Seawell informed me that that was satisfactory.
- 10Q Did you at that time explain or give any reason to Colonel Seawell as to why you were going to North Africa?
- A I explained that the purpose of my visit to North Africa was to inspect the Maintenance Task Force and the Control Team from the 43d Bomb Wing and to visit 5th Air Division Headquarters because of the pending increase in the dispatch of B-47's to North Africa for visual training. This trip had been planned several times before and I had been unable to make it.
- 11Q In planning this trip to North Africa, what type of training did you contemplate in so far as your flight down, flights while there and return flight to the United Kingdom?
- A When the trip was initially established, which was the preceding week, I had decided to take the Wing Standardization Board Crew

BURCHINAL

SECRET



and while I was conducting any staff visit it would complete its qualifications under SAC Regulation 51-26. Shortly before the trip, however, I decided to fly with the Wing Stand Board Crew while it accomplished its requirements on a "Globe Trotter" profile-type mission, in order to establish certain data which I felt was necessary for the Wing Planning Staff to properly plan similar missions upon our return to the ZI.

12Q In other words, you planned a normal training mission to North Africa, training while in North Africa, which would be a second flight, and a "Globe Trotter" type mission for the return flight to Fairford; is that correct?

A No.

13Q Would you clarify that, please?

A Yes. I planned to make a training flight to North Africa and then in lieu of the crew's training flight while I was conducting my staff visit I would accompany the crew and that would be the "Globe Trotter" profile-type mission that would end up at Fairford.

13Q This change in the planning of your training to be conducted while on this TDY to North Africa occurred approximately how long prior to your departure from Fairford? Do you follow me there?

A The idea had been turning over in my mind since the preceding Friday, the 12th, when I had discovered that the information we had received regarding the "Globe Trotter" type mission which I previously mentioned had not yet been used or studied by my planners. I expect the answer to your question, Colonel Campbell, would be Sunday afternoon, the 14th, at which time I tried to contact my Stand Board Crew, found they were off the Base, and left word that they should be in my office at eight o'clock the following morning -- the 15th. At that time I informed them of my intentions and asked them to draw up a flight plan for me to examine. At that time I reviewed the provisions of SAC Letter 50-1 with my Wing Stand Board Crew in so far as the training requirements were concerned.

14Q Upon the completion of briefing your Stand Board Crew, did you at this time tell other members of your staff your intentions?

A Only in a general sort of way from which they could deduce that I was planning something out of the ordinary routine of training flights that we had been accomplishing. For instance, I asked my Director of Material to find a chemical toilet on the Base, if possible, to put in this aircraft and to procure certain items of food, such as fruit juices and fruits to take along on this mission. I told Colonel Miller that I would probably have tanker requirements for refueling both here and in North Africa and that I would probably not be able to firmly schedule them in advance but would have to schedule them while I was airborne on this particular flight. Colonel Marts was absent from the Station and I believe that on Sunday, the 14th, I told him that I was thinking of flying a "Globe Trotter" type profile. I'm not sure of that. I also researched the files of the Boeing technical representative, Mr. Whittington, for any information regarding long-range flights, oil consumption, etc., but found that Boeing had no data on this subject.

15Q At this time, which was Monday, 15 November, then your director



of Operations knew that you planned a "Globe Trotter" type mission returning to the UK?

A Whether I referred to it specifically as a "Globe Trotter" type mission, I don't know. He knew I was planning a long mission which would require refueling.

16Q To the best of your recollection do you remember telling your Director of Operations or anyone else, at this time, anything with regard to the duration of this return mission to the UK?

A I remember discussing with my Director of Operations that I didn't want the word of this type of mission to get around, that I thought it could be done, that I was looking for data and that my plan was to file two approximately 12-hour long flight plans — the first from North Africa — and then if things didn't work out or we had engineering troubles we would land and it would be a normal flight home. If everything went well we would file the second approximate 12-hour long flight plan in the air over Fairford and that would complete this long-range mission we are discussing.

17Q Do I infer from your answer that you did not particularly desire your staff communicate to higher headquarters to the effect that you might be planning a "Globe Trotter" type mission of approximately 24-hours duration?

A No. I'm glad you brought that point up. My sole intent in asking that it not be discussed was to avoid any talk locally in my own organization and any speculation in my own organization since planning for this type of mission and discussion of the requirements for this type of mission had not been gone into with my crews nor my staff. It had nothing to do with trying to keep this mission secret from higher headquarters.

18Q Would you repeat specifically what you had in mind in flying this type of mission?

A Yes. I knew that upon our return to the ZI my Wing would come under the provisions of the previously cited SAC Letter 50-1, dated 27 August 1954. The only data which we had in our possession and had been able to get was a study from the 15th Air Force regarding an experience of the 22d Bomb Wing on these type missions. I felt that that study was inconclusive as a basis for sound planning. I did not know from that study, for instance, what oil consumption to expect and oil can be a critical factor in a B-47 engine. For instance, approximately a third of your available oil supply is trapped during jet penetration and if your oil consumption were high and you made a jet penetration you could have engine failures resulting therefrom. This study, for instance, did not say that a long-range type descent instead of jet penetrations should be made upon the conclusion of such flights. This study further discussed how various crews used oxygen, which supply is insufficient for a mission of this duration, but did not come up with any recommended way to use oxygen. This study discussed how crews ate on such missions but did not state that there was one way to eat on such missions better than any other way. These were the types of answers I was looking for in conducting this flight.

BURCHINAL



- 19Q In connection with this contemplated approximate 24-hour mission, did you seek data from higher headquarters' sources, namely, Headquarters, 7th Air Division?
- A No.
- 20Q Did you, to the best of your recollection, discuss "Globe Trotter" type missions with Headquarters, 7th Air Division representatives?
- A No.
- 21Q At the time that you were planning this mission on Monday, did you feel that you should discuss this particularly long mission with higher headquarters to obtain approval?
- A No, I didn't, because "Globe Trotter" type missions have become a standard requirement and I did not consider it an unusual flight in the sense that it would require higher headquarters' approval.
- 22Q At any time prior to takeoff on this unusually long flight did you contemplate flying longer than your 24-hours' plan?
- A No, as a matter of fact I was fully prepared to land after twelve hours and that is why we had arranged two 12-hour increments of flight plans.
- 23Q At what time did you take off from Sidi Slimane on the flight back to the UK?
- A I took off from Sidi Slimane at 1230 Zebra on Wednesday, the 17th of November.
- 24Q And you filed a clearance for what duration?
- A The exact duration I don't remember, but it would be in the neighborhood of ten and a half to eleven hours.
- 25Q Your intentions upon takeoff were --
- A To fly in the Sidi local area using the bomb ranges at Ksar-es-Souk and Marrakech to complete the visual bombing requirements for my Wing Stand Beard Crew. Following the bombing we were to refuel and proceed to England. There was nothing in the weather briefing which we received that indicated we would not be able to land in England; however, my intentions were that if everything were going properly we would pick up a tanker over England from my refueling squadron at Lakenheath, refuel in the air and proceed back to North Africa on the second approximate 12-hour part of this "Globe Trotter" flight plan. Upon arriving in England I discovered through my control that weather had gone below minimums, that aircraft in the air had already been diverted to North Africa and that it would not be possible to refuel. We had approximately 44,000 pounds of fuel remaining on the aircraft which was plenty to go back to North Africa with at least 16 to 20,000 pounds reserve. I further ascertained from my control room that the weather was expected to be above minimums by 1000 Zebra the following morning, 18 November. I therefore told Colonel Miller to file another 12-hour flight plan for me from England to North Africa and return to England and also to arrange for a refueling for me in North Africa upon my arrival there.
- 26Q Your intention upon departing England on the night of Wednesday, 17 November, was to fly approximately twelve more hours completing your "Globe Trotter" mission, landing at Fairford on the

BURCHINAL



- morning of Thursday, 18 November; is that correct?
- A That is correct.
- 27Q Approximately how many hours would you have been in the air had you landed at the completion of your "Globe Trotter" mission on Thursday, 18 November?
- A Approximately twenty-two hours.
- 28Q As the flight culminated in a flight with a duration of approximately forty-seven hours and one half, what were the circumstances that caused this duration to exceed your twenty-two hours?
- A We proceeded to North Africa as planned on the night of Wednesday and early morning Thursday, 17 and 18 November, refueled as scheduled and proceeded back to England with an arrival time of approximately ten o'clock in the morning, or shortly thereafter, when weather had advised me Fairford would be above minimums. Upon arrival over Fairford I discovered that weather was below B-47 minimums at every base at which I could land but that weather was above the minimums specified for tanker operations and that Colonel Miller had arranged a refueling for me with one tanker. The tanker, after my initial contact with Federal Control, was on standby and took off. I rendezvoused with him over Lakenheath, accomplished my refueling of something over 50,000 pounds and filed a flight plan for return to North Africa. At that time I determined that none of the fields in the UK were expected to go above minimums that day, Thursday, 18 November.
- 29Q In other words, you had been in the air approximately twenty-two hours on Thursday, 18 November, when you were refueled by a tanker over Lakenheath?
- A Yes, and we filed, as best I can remember, a 6-hour flight plan for the return flight to Sidi Slimane.
- 30Q Was it your intention upon flying this approximate 6-hour flight plan to Sidi Slimane to land at Sidi?
- A Yes -- to get back to an area where I had open landing fields.
- 31Q Upon returning to North Africa you did not land. At some point there you made up your mind or you changed your intention of landing in North Africa and continued your mission. Can you tell me about when this was and the circumstances relating to this?
- A Yes. During the flight to North Africa on 18 November I reviewed with my crew training requirements still outstanding and reviewed again "Globe Trotter" training requirements and ascertained that we still needed one night celestial mission for the observer, which we had not yet accomplished. The airplane was performing beautifully. We agreed that if we could get tanker support from Sidi Slimane that we would ask for the tankers to refuel us and we would fly two night celestial missions at Sidi -- from Sidi to Bizerte and from Bizerte back to Sidi. Upon arrival at Sidi we determined that we could get the required tanker support and a message was waiting for me from Colonel Miller to the effect that UK weather was expected to be above minimums not before but by 1000 Zebra the following morning, Friday, the 19th. We therefore confirmed our request for tanker refueling -- one shortly

BURCHINAL



SECRET

after our arrival, which I believe was 1630, the 18th, and another about 1000, rather 2200, the 18th, at which time we would start our night celestial missions. We further determined that upon conclusion of the night celestial missions, one refueling upon return to Sidi and a second refueling at daybreak would get us back to the UK shortly after 1000 on the 19th when Fairford was forecast to be above minimums. At that time we told Sidi of our intention, if they got weather confirmation to refuel, as I have just stated, and return to Fairford the following morning. I requested a special weather forecast for later on that evening -- I believe about 2100 -- confirming the weather forecast for Fairford. If the weather forecast was not good, it was my intention to land at Sidi upon completion of the night celestial missions. At approximately 2100 I received confirmation of weather above minimums at Fairford for 1000 Zebra on the morning of the 19th, so I confirmed the tanker requirement for one refueling at approximately 0330 and then a double refueling which would give us maximum fuel at daybreak or approximately 0630 in the morning, the 19th. These refuelings were carried out as scheduled and we returned to Fairford arriving with approximately 55,000 pounds of fuel reserve over Fairford at approximately 1045 Zebra the morning of the 19th. Weather was above minimums as forecast and since we were too heavy to land we spent approximately an hour burning off our excess fuel then proceeded to make a penetration letdown and GCA landing at Fairford at 1205 Zebra, the 19th of November. To get back to your question, Colonel Campbell. The decision not to land at Sidi and to accomplish the additional training with the additional refuelings which extended this flight to forty-seven hours was mine. It was made on route to North Africa and in the Sidi area based on the latest information I could get from Sidi regarding UK weather and tanker availability. It was based on aircraft performance at the time and it was based on the physical condition of the crew and myself at the time -- both of which were excellent.

32Q At the time you made this decision you realized, I am certain, that your aircraft would be flying in excess of forty hours?

A I did.

33Q Are you familiar with Air Force Regulation 60-10, which I'll hand you now, dated 17 January 1949, which covers record flights and flights of a spectacular nature. To repeat, were you familiar with this regulation at the time you made that decision.

A I was familiar, generally, with the provisions of this regulation. The application of this regulation to the series of events which led me to fly in excess of forty hours did not enter my mind at the time I decided to keep flying.

34Q In other words, you did not recall to your mind at that time the necessity for obtaining higher headquarters' approval for this unusual flight.

A No, primarily because it has been my interpretation of this regulation that it applies to flights designed or planned to establish records. Mine did not start out that way. It became that

BURCHINAL

SECRET



way through circumstances and relating this regulation to what we were doing just did not enter my mind.

35Q I have in my hand and am going to pass to you now 7th Air Division Letter 62-2 dated 14 October 1954 entitled "Flying Safety," subtitled "Crew Fatigue." Have you seen that regulation before?

A Yes, I have seen this regulation and I am familiar with it — this letter, excuse me — and I am familiar with its provisions.

36Q At the time that you made this decision to extend your flight in excess of forty hours in order to consummate your landing at Fairford on 19 November, did you realize that you were not following the intent of the directive I have just handed you?

A No, I did not for this reason. To go back — when I said that on Sunday, I think it was, the preceding Sunday, the 14th, when I had made up my mind to try to get in touch with my crew to fly this mission, I myself got ten hours sleep. I did get in touch with my crew by 'phone and I know they had in excess of eight hours' sleep Sunday night. I further told them Monday that I wanted a full night's sleep Monday night for both the crew and myself in preparation for this mission. To the best of my knowledge this was accomplished. We had further arranged, since we had one extra crew member, for periods of rest in the aircraft. This involved an air mattress in the passageway from the pilot's position to the observer's position and blankets we had. We utilized these and each crew member had utilized it at regular intervals during the flight. At the time that I decided to continue this flight I personally checked the physical condition of each crew member and, as I earlier stated, our physical condition was good. We were not feeling tired and we were getting rest. I therefore do not feel that I, in making that decision, was violating the letter or the intent of the 7th Air Division letter.

37Q Were any other unusual preparations made for this flight? You mentioned the rubber mattress. Were there some others?

A I mentioned one other previously. We were able to find a B-47 type chemical toilet on the Base and we had it put in the airplane. The only other extraordinary provisions were a filling of the oil tanks at Sidi until we had positive overflow from the tanks on each engine and a complete servicing of the oxygen system. In addition I procured from the doctor at Fairford some dexadrine tablets to take should it become necessary. However the crew and I had agreed before the flight that we would only take them if it became necessary. These, to my knowledge, were the only extraordinary measures which we took in preparation for this flight.

38Q Returning once more to a previous question. At the time that you made the decision to extend the flight beyond the "Globe Trotter" phase did you feel — without regard to the regulation

BURCHINAL



SECRET

which we have cited -- that you should contact higher headquarters for authority to continue this flight for a duration of greater than forty hours?

- A There were a series of accumulating circumstances in it. In the first place we were exceeding normal time limits for a "Globe Trotter" mission when we decided to go ahead with the night celestial requirements I previously covered. These requirements, incidentally, would permit the upgrading of my Wing Stand Board Crew to lead status and it would be the first such crew to be upgraded since our conversion to B-47's. I found myself, therefore, in the period short of the known endurance record but longer than the normal "Globe Trotter" mission and when we decided that the added refuelings would complete the night celestials and get us home I did not consider at that time that I should state my intentions to higher authority and receive approval for what we were about to do. I knew that we would be exceeding the present record. I did not realize over Sidi Slimane at 2100 on the 18th of November that I should try to contact anyone for approval to continue the flight I have just discussed.

39Q In making this decision you have stated the physical condition of your crew was good and the aircraft performance was good. Weren't you concerned somewhat with regard to crew fatigue at the completion of approximately forty-seven and a half hours of flying, especially in view of the marginal weather conditions at your destination?

- A I fully intended to make the landing at destination. I have made landings at this destination at our prescribed minimums with no difficulty. We have an excellent GCA and, as you know, the weather in the UK is perfect for instrument flying -- smooth without turbulence. The previous day over the UK we had seen that this deck of fog only extended to about 1,500 feet, so I envisaged a similar situation with actual instrument conditions only obtaining through the very last part of the GCA approach and letdown. I also considered the matter you raised of crew fatigue. I stated that I intended to make the approach. I accomplished the double refueling, most of the double refueling, prior to leaving North Africa at dawn on the 19th of November. This refueling was conducted without a disconnect. As soon as the refueling was completed I immediately left the airplane commander's position on the airplane. The co-pilot had been sleeping. He took over the front seat to get some pilot time, since Major Earhart is an instructor pilot and Captain Franke is presently being trained for upgrading to aircraft commander status, while I lay down on the mattress to get some sleep. I slept for approximately two hours or until about the time we reached Paris. At that point I had a cup of coffee and moved back into the aircraft commander's seat at approximately Le Havre. At that point also we established contact with Federal Control and proceeded in and landed as I have previously stated.

BURCHINAL

SECRET



- 40Q Was there any difficulty in making your letdown and landing?
- A Yes. After we had burned down our fuel and started our jet penetration, Brize approach turned me over to Feeder Control. Feeder Control did what they have done to me on at least four previous occasions; that is, during my high-speed descent they have turned me on a short base leg so close to the field that when I came out on final approach I had not yet been able to get down my flaps and was not able to establish final approach air speed and aircraft attitude. Realizing that this was happening from GCA instructions, I made no attempt to land on that approach and never got below 500 feet but accomplished a standard go 'round and at 500 feet picked up GCA on the downwind leg at 2,000 feet, at which time I was above the lower deck of clouds and followed their instructions around for the landing which we made at 1205. At this time, forty minutes prior to our scheduled landing at Fairford, the instructor pilot, Major Earhart, took the first dexadrine tablets that had been used on the flight. Not that he felt fatigued, but he wanted to be sure that for the landing phase he was as completely alert as he could possibly be. He occupied the co-pilot's seat during the approach and landing.
- 41Q You have indicated earlier in your testimony that you discussed various B-47 factors with Mr. Whittington, the Boeing tech rep. In your discussions with him did you get any ideas as to the expected amount of oil consumption for a "Globe Trotter" type mission of 20 to 24 hours' duration?
- A Yes. I had received this information verbally from different sources -- one from Mr. Whittington stating that in Boeing test missions approximating 20 to 24 hours normally resulted in three to six quarts of oil consumption and I related that to information I had received prior to coming overseas regarding "Globe Trotter" missions in which oil consumption was in the neighborhood of six quarts per engine. I did not therefore feel that oil starvation was a problem in this particular flight as we extended our flight plan. We carefully monitored our oil pressure during descents for refueling and during climbouts and at no time was there any indication of oil starvation on this mission. It might be of interest to add here that the highest oil consumption we had on any engine, it has turned out, was fifteen quarts; the lowest, I believe, was eleven quarts out of a total available capacity for each engine of forty quarts. Our data, therefore, follows closely the data of three to six quarts consumption for a 20 to 24 hour mission.
- 42Q Can you tell us the approximate rest that each crew member obtained while on this flight?
- A Yes, because I controlled and scheduled the flying and the rest for all crew members, except the observer, regularly. Provisions for the observer, since there was no replacement for him on the aircraft, were made independantly and separately. The crew itself, myself, the instructor pilot, and the co-pilot rested on an average of two hours after each six hours of flying. There



SECRET

were times when that varied, when there might be a three-hour rest period after a seven-hour period of flying, but we tried to keep it as close as that. For instance, I had had two hours' rest just prior to the double refueling over Sidi on the morning of the 19th -- about two hours prior to the double refueling. I had two more hours' sleep following the double refueling in preparation for the landing back at Fairford. We established before each refueling who would primarily accomplish the refueling, although both Major Earhart and I participated on almost all refuelings. The primary individual always was scheduled for rest immediately prior to the refuelings. The observer was a separate problem. For instance, when we determined to fly celestial missions we scheduled a four-hour period during which we would fly the airplane by pilotage with no requirements for the observer so that he could rest and sleep before his night celestial missions. During each leg of our missions from Sidi to the UK and back to Sidi there were portions that could be conducted by radio navigation. During these portions the observer was informed that his requirements for crew duties ceased and he was to get rest. The observer also was given greater leeway in the use of oxygen than the normal crew members. We found as we extended the mission that so long as we kept the cabin altitude at or under 11,000 feet no one felt any particular lack of oxygen and that we could preserve our oxygen supply for such critical areas as refuelings, at which time the crew members conducting the refueling would go on full oxygen. This we followed as the mission was extended to preserve the oxygen supply, with the exception of the observer who we told to use oxygen as he needed it for any total twenty-minute period during each hour. That seemed to work out pretty well. We were on 100 percent oxygen for our descent, letdown and landing at Fairford and had some 60 to 80 pounds remaining in the system upon landing.

43Q Do you have any data or permanent information that we have not discussed which might aid the investigation of the circumstances surrounding this unusual flight that you would like to bring out at this time?

A No, but if there are any further questions that you or anyone else could think of to ask me I'd be delighted to answer them, and I'd like to add that the testimony I have given is to the best of my recollection. Things were happening one after the other in the air. We were planning only for short periods ahead. I don't have the precise chronology in my mind.

DAVID A. BURCHINAL  
Colonel, USAF  
Commander

BURCHINAL

SECRET



SECRET

Testimony of Kenneth E. Marts, Colonel, USAF, given to William B. Campbell, Colonel, USAF, investigating officer, Headquarters 7th Air Division, APO 125, New York, New York at Headquarters, 43rd Bombardment Wing, APO 129, New York, New York, 20 November 1954.

Having been duly sworn and advised of his rights under Article 31 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice the witness testified as follows:

1. Q State your name, rank, serial number, and organization?  
A Kenneth E. Marts, Colonel, 4416A, Deputy Wing Commander, 43rd Bombardment Wing.
2. Q How long have you been with this organization?  
A My EDCSA to the 43rd Bombardment Wing was 1 June 1954, however, I physically reported following B-47 school approximately 25 July 1954.
3. Q You have been with this organization during TDY tour here in United Kingdom?  
A That is correct.
4. Q When did aircraft 062 B-47 depart Fairford on this mission to North Africa?  
A I was not present on the station when it departed, however, I believe it left 16 November 1954.
5. Q When did you leave the station?  
A On Monday, 15 November.
6. Q When did you return to RAF station Fairford?  
A On Thursday the 18th of November.
7. Q Then you were present on the station when 062 landed on 18 November?  
A Yes, I was.
8. Q Prior to departure on Monday, 15 November, did you participate in or have knowledge for the planning of the flight to North Africa and then return to United Kingdom?  
A Colonel Burchinal had informed me of his intent to make a trip to North Africa. It was necessary for me to know as Deputy Commander of his absence and his intentions.
9. Q When Colonel Burchinal discussed this trip to North Africa did he indicate to you that he intended to make a routine flight there and a routine return flight?  
A Yes, he stated his intention to fly a normal mission down and a normal mission back in accomplishment of the crew's training requirements.
10. Q Colonel Marts, would you explain to me what a normal mission to North Africa and a normal mission returning would be?  
A I suggest the record reflect an answer to this question from our Director of Operations. However, I will be glad to explain now if you prefer to have it in the record at this time.
11. Q That will not be necessary since I will obtain that from your Director of Operations, however, do you have any knowledge of prior planning being conducted for this mission or any portion of this mission which would indicate to you that an unusual type of planning mission is being planned?  
A No, I don't. I should add that any flying activity that is accomplished to fulfill SAC training requirements would not be considered unusual, although our normal missions during the period of our TDY in United Kingdom have been from seven to nine hours duration.

2  
SECRET



12. Q Do you know who were participating in this flight?  
A Yes.
13. Q Do you know the names of the participants?  
A The crew consisted of Major Barhart, Aircraft Commander; Captain Franko the pilot, and Major McCoy. Colonel Burchinal accompanied this crew. I might also add that this is the wing standardization board crew.
14. Q Was any portion of this mission to North Africa cleared with the Commander, 7th Air Division or his staff?  
A I am not sure, although it is possible that 7th Air Division was notified that Colonel Burchinal was to be absent from the United Kingdom without my knowledge.
15. Q Are you familiar with the contents of AFR 60-10, dated 17 January 1949 which covers record of flying and flights of a spectacular nature?  
A I am not familiar with the regulation number as such, but the title brings to mind that flights of spectacular nature must be cleared through SAC Headquarters prior to execution. I remember having heard something to that effect during the time I was assigned for duty at SAC Headquarters.
16. Q When did aircraft 062 land in United Kingdom?  
A At approximately 1155 hours, 19 November 1954.
17. Q How many hours had this aircraft been airborne when it landed?  
A Approximately forty-seven hours and thirty-five minutes.
18. Q After you returned to Fairford on Thursday, 18 November, were you acquainted with the fact that this aircraft 062 was performing a mission of unusual duration?  
A At the time I returned on Thursday night, 18 November, it was apparent that the flight had extended into an unusually long period and there was a good deal of speculation as to whether or not it would exceed any established duration flight record.
19. Q Upon your return Thursday, 18 November when you were informed that 062 was still airborne, approximately how many hours had it been airborne at that time?  
A I'd forgotten exactly when I landed, however, as I recall it was about 1500, so it had been airborne about twenty-six hours.
20. Q Who informed you that the aircraft had been airborne approximately twenty-six hours?  
A I was aware of that fact prior to departing Lakenheath. As a matter of fact, I had been watching the flight all that day at Lakenheath because of the weather and the refueling problem.
21. Q Upon realizing that the aircraft had been airborne twenty-six hours, did you feel that perhaps higher headquarters should be consulted?  
A. No, Lancer Control had all the necessary information on the flight and was monitoring its progress.
22. Q Would you presume that Headquarters 7th Air Division had full knowledge of this flight?  
A I assumed that if there was any unusual development from it that Lancer Control would advise the 7ADiv Commander through normal channels.
23. Q When you arrived at Fairford on Thursday night and prior to the landing of 062 on Friday, 19 November, did you contact anyone from 7th Air Division with regard to the unusual length or circumstances around this flight?  
A No.
24. Q Did you learn upon returning to Fairford the intention of the Aircraft Commander with regard to the overall duration of the flight?  
A I went immediately to Colonel Miller, the Director of Operations, and asked him the status of Colonel Burchinal's flight. He explained to me



SECRET

A (cont'd)

that he was running a Globe Trotter profile and had returned to Sidi Slimane after having been refueled at approximately 1030 hours that same day over Lakenheath

25. Q You were at Lakenheath on the morning of Thursday, 18 November, when Colonel Burchinal's plane was refueling, is that correct?

A Yes.

26. Q Can you tell me what the weather conditions were at that time?

A Weather condition at Lakenheath at the time he was refueling at approximately 1030 was little better than zero-zero. I recall it being zero-zero in the morning and it was just beginning to lift at about that time.

27. Q Was the weather above landing minimum at Fairford?

A I don't believe so. As I recall, the ceiling and visibility was sufficient for the takeoff of the tanker which refueled Colonel Burchinal, however. The fog was lifting at the time and it was possible to get the tanker into Lakenheath by the time he finished refueling and made his letdown.

28. Q Did you know Colonel Burchinal's intention in this refueling at 1030, on 18 November?

A Yes. I knew he intended to return to North Africa at that point. He had just about finished or had finished his first twenty or so hours of flight. I knew he would be required to return to North Africa because there was no suitable landing field in the United Kingdom at the time.

29. Q You have mentioned Globe Trotter type mission, when did you first have knowledge that a mission of this nature was to be performed by Colonel Burchinal?

A When I talked to Colonel Miller after landing at Fairford Thursday, 18 November.

30. Q I have from 7th Air Division a letter 62-2 dated 14 October 1954, subject, Flying Safety Crew Fatigue, are you familiar with this 7th Air Division letter?

A Yes, I think so, at least the contents are familiar to me.

31. Q Are you familiar with the last paragraph of this letter?

A Yes, I am.

32. Q Did you, at the time you learned of the unusual duration of this mission, become at all concerned with regard to crew fatigue which this directive from 7th Air Division covers?

A Naturally I was concerned, however, my concern was one of operation interest, not one of worry. When I realized his flight was running into a duration in excess of the average training mission length I felt that Colonel Burchinal knew exactly what he was doing, and there was no cause for worry on my part. I might add, he was also flying with one of the most experienced crew in the wing. As a matter of fact the wing standboard crew.

33. Q Colonel Marta, do you have any comment or facts which we have not touched upon that might be pertinent to this investigation of circumstances surrounding the flight made by Colonel Burchinal of approximately forty-seven hours duration?

A Yes. For the record, I would like to clarify the purpose of my presence at Lakenheath during this flight in question. Several comments have been made that would indicate some people have associated my presence there with the possibility of preplanning a flight of this magnitude. Actually there were three separate reasons for my trip to Lakenheath, none of them associated with the flight of Colonel Burchinal. First,

SECRET



SECRET

A (cont'd)

I conducted a survey of RAF Station Oakington in accordance with a directive received from 7th Air Division. Second, the wing commander had requested that I look into certain personnel problems involving our 43rd AR squadron and their relationship with the Lakenheath base complement. Third, I wanted to make a few routine flights with some of our AR crews.

34. Q Do you have anything else to offer?

A No.

KENNETH E. MARTS  
Colonel, USAF  
Deputy Commander

SECRET



SECRET

TESTIMONY OF LT COLONEL JEAN B. MILLER, JR., USAF

Given to William B. Campbell, Colonel, USAF, Investigating Officer, Headquarters, 7th Air Division, APO 125, New York, New York, at Headquarters, 3919th Air Base Group, APO 129, New York, New York, 20 November 1954.

Having been duly sworn and advised of his rights under Article 31 of the Uniform code of Military Justice, the witness testified as follows:

- 1Q Would you state your name, full name, rank, serial number and position in the 43d Bomb Wing?
- A Jean B. Miller, Junior, Colonel, 9477A, Director of Operations, 43d Bomb Wing.
- 2Q How long have you been with the 43d Bomb Wing?
- A About two and a half years.
- 3Q And during that period of two and a half years what jobs have you held?
- A First I was Director of Material and I held that job for approximately six months and then I was appointed Director of Operations and I have held that job since.
- 4Q In your job you or your representatives meet with material personnel and maintenance personnel at a weekly SAC Reg 60-9 meeting.
- A Yes.
- 5Q During the course of this meeting is it common practice to set up flights for the next week or for program periods in the future?
- A We generally set up flights for the next week.
- 6Q Is it true that aircraft number 52062 was set up at last week's 60-9 meeting for a flight to North Africa?
- A That's right.
- 7Q Who was supposed to fly on that aircraft?
- A Colonel Burchinal wanted to go down to see how our crews were doing in North Africa and when we set the flight up he was tentatively scheduled to go with Major Earhart. It wasn't firm at the time because we didn't know what his commitments would be.
- 8Q Why was the Stand Board Crew, of which I presume Major Earhart was the pilot, making this flight down there?
- A There was no particular reason for that — at least it didn't come out prior to the meeting. He rotates his flying with all the crews in the Wing. As I recall, he hadn't flown with Pat before. But I can't recall any particular reason that he was actually set up to fly with Pat on this particular flight. I mean he might have had his reasons but he didn't discuss them with me.
- 9Q Normally training requirements are accomplished on missions, aren't they?
- A Right. Every mission we schedule has some training requirements scheduled.

MILLER

SECRET



- 10Q On this flight that Colonel Burchinal took with the Stand Board Crew, departing Tuesday the 16th of November and returning to Fairford on 19 November, was there much training accomplished, do you know?
- A Well, I don't know just exactly what training was accomplished. We put it in the report. Actually he finished all the 51-26 requirements, as I recall. Those are the training requirements that are set up for Wing Stand Board Crews.
- 11Q Did this training accomplished on this particular mission meet the requirements set up by this wing for lead crew status?
- A Yes. Yes and no. We put out a letter that established certain criteria for crews to accomplish to be upgraded to lead status. In that letter the preamble stated normally a crew will accomplish the following before being considered for upgrading. ~~In the~~ upgrade from combat ready to lead status is entirely up to the Wing Commander. He can establish any criteria he pleases. That's why that one paragraph is put in there ~~because he could give it at that time as he saw it.~~
- 12Q Now, as the Director of Operations you probably would know or your staff would know what is contemplated on a mission that is scheduled; is that correct?
- A That's right.
- 13Q Prior to takeoff on Tuesday the 16th of November was there any unusual planning accomplished for the mission to North Africa and its return?
- A Not to my knowledge. I recall the night before the flight Colonel Burchinal, as he is in the habit of doing when he is flying, got together with the crew and completed the mission planning for the trip to North Africa as far as I know. I didn't stay there and I don't know exactly what they did plan. I assumed that's what they were planning.
- 14Q Specifically what was planned for this mission?
- A I can't answer that question specifically. The crew knows their requirements. They are monitored by the squadron operations officer and I can't answer that question. I don't know specifically what they were scheduled for. That is, in detail the squadron operations officer monitors everything that the crew is scheduled for on most of their flights, but that's about the best I can say.
- 15Q Prior to takeoff did the Wing Commander divulge to you that he might with that crew be planning an unusually long mission?
- A He didn't put it that way. He said, "We are going down to North Africa and see how our crews are doing down there. We are going to take off from North Africa and we are going to file a 12-hour flight plan and if conditions are right we'll extend for twelve hours and accomplish a "Globe Trotter" mission.
- 16Q Was that unusual for him to indicate to you that he was planning, if things worked out all right, to fly a total of twenty-four hours without landing?
- A It wasn't unusual for him to indicate that to me, but the flight if it had been completed on the twenty-four hour basis would have been unusual only in the respect that it would be the first "Globe Trotter" mission that we flew.

MILLER



- 17Q Did you have any previous knowledge whatsoever that this crew of the 062 might fly a mission that totaled better than forty-seven hours?
- A None whatsoever.
- 18Q To the best of your knowledge, do you know of anyone within the 43d Bomb Wing who might have such knowledge?
- A No, I don't. We were completely amazed when we finally added it up and saw what it amounted to.
- 19Q When did you realize that this mission was going to be unusually long? Let me clarify that. You have indicated to me that you knew that a "Globe Trotter" mission of approximately 20 to 24 hours might be flown. When did you realize that it was going to exceed twenty-four hours by quite a few hours?
- A Well, I didn't know when it was going to exceed twenty-four hours by quite a few hours at any particular time because of communications difficulties. He came up here after flying approximately twenty hours -- I don't know exactly -- and we were socked in here but we were able to get a tanker off. He couldn't have possibly landed because the weather was below minimums. We got a tanker off, refueled him and he went back to Africa. From that point out we didn't see him until he came back and landed.
- 20Q Did you have any idea when he left here after flying approximately 20 to 22 hours that he would remain in the air long enough to extend that flight to the following day which would then increase the duration of the flight to better than forty hours?
- A No. We had no way of knowing that. The flight just developed, as I understand, after he got started.
- 21Q Did you at any time prior to this flight and after you knew that a "Globe Trotter" mission might be flown notify higher headquarters that such a flight was contemplated?
- A We didn't notify them that a "Globe Trotter" flight was going to be flown because that is spelled out in SAC Reg 50-8. It is a routine requirement. However, when we extended his flight plan we did notify higher headquarters to extend his flight plan and gave them the route.
- 22Q How did you notify higher headquarters of the extension of this flight?
- A By contacting Lancer Control, which is our normal procedure.
- 23Q It's normal procedure then through your control to notify Lancer Control, which control is a part of higher headquarters; is that correct?
- A That's right.
- 24Q As this flight developed to a long duration B-47 flight, did you become somewhat concerned that higher headquarters was not brought into the planning for such a mission?
- A No, I didn't, because our Wing Commander was in the airplane at the time the flight extended to unusual proportions and we assumed that any notification that should have been made would have been made from North Africa. The only notification that

MILLER



SECRET

we gave any higher headquarters was when 062 extended its flight plan after his second arrival here at Fairford. From that point on we didn't know what his intentions were.

25Q Did you try to ascertain the Wing Commander's intentions after the 12-hour extension?

A No, I didn't even question him about them. As a matter of fact, we had a weather problem here at that time and I was pretty busy trying to get airplanes off the ground.

26Q Since the Wing has been TDY here in the UK have you queried Headquarters, 7th Air Division, for planning factors or other data particularly with regard to flights of long duration?

A Some time ago we got this supplement to SAC REG 50-8 which said the "Globe Trotters" would be routine requirement for all EWP crews. At that time I was concerned that we would have to fly them here and discussed it with the Colonel. He said we had better find out about it and I turned it over to the training shop and asked them to query 7th Air Division on any data they might have on flights of long duration. I don't know what the results of their query was.

27Q You don't know whether or not 7th Air Division answered that query or not?

A I don't recall whether they did or not. It might have come into the training shop and I might not have seen it. If it did, I didn't see it.

28Q Then this query that you made of Headquarters, 7th Air Division, was directed primarily toward accomplishment of "Globe Trotter" requirements under SAC Letter Number 50-1; is that correct?

A That's right.

29Q You then were not contemplating a record-breaking flight by this query?

A No, we had no intention of doing it.

30Q When you did have knowledge that this flight was becoming of longer duration than a "Globe Trotter" would consume, did you become concerned with regards to the content of Air Force Regulation Number 60-10, which covers record flights and flights of a spectacular nature?

A We didn't know anything specifically about what he was doing. We didn't know that it was becoming a spectacular flight.

31Q Do you have knowledge of that particular regulation?

A Yes.

32Q And you had knowledge at the time that the flight became unusual even though you didn't know it was becoming spectacular?

A I know about the regulation and have known about it for some time.

33Q Are you familiar with 7th Air Division Letter Number 62-2, dated 14 October 1954, which is entitled "Flying Safety," subtitle "Crew Fatigue?"

A No, I don't recall ever having seen it.

34Q Did you have concern over the crew fatigue on this particular flight?

A No, I had no particular concern. The Colonel was in the airplane. Our best crew was in the airplane. They are all levelheaded. They knew what they were doing. I had no concern whatsoever.

MILLER

SECRET



SECRET

35Q Did you have every feeling that Headquarters, 7th Air Division, knew within the Operations Section, at least, that this flight which began from North Africa on Wednesday had been extended past its original twelve hours or thereabouts? Did you have every reason to believe it had?

A Yes. We notified their control room and we naturally assumed that their control room in turn notified whoever in that headquarters might be interested in what was going on.

36Q Do you have anything that you'd like to add to your testimony that might further this investigation or anything that might be pertinent to the investigation?

A No, I don't think so.

*Jan Miller*  
Col. USAF

MILLER

SECRET



SECRET

TESTIMONY OF MAJOR PAT H. EARHART, USAF

Given to William B. Campbell, Colonel, USAF, Investigating Officer, Headquarters, 7th Air Division, APO 125, New York, New York, at Headquarters, 3919th Air Base Group, APO 129, New York, New York, 20 November 1954.

Having been duly sworn and advised of his rights under Article 31 of the Uniform code of Military Justice, the witness testified as follows:

- 1Q Would you give your name, rank, serial number and position in the 43d Bomb Wing?
- A Pat H. Earhart, Major, AO760604. I'm aircraft commander, Wing Stand Board.
- 2Q How long have you been with this organization?
- A I was assigned to the 43d in September of 1952, sir. I took over my present job on approximately the first of July, this year.
- 3Q As Wing Stand Board?
- A Yes, sir. I was the only change in the Stand Board at the time. Major McCoy and Captain Franko had been members of the Stand Board since approximately the first of January.
- 4Q Of what year?
- A This year, sir -- 1954.
- 5Q You have just participated in a flight of unusual duration, haven't you?
- A Yes, sir; I have.
- 6Q Approximately how long was it?
- A Forty-seven hours and thirty-five minutes.
- 7Q Was that a record for B-47 operations?
- A As far as I know, sir, yes. I believe the last record was made by the 306th in thirty-five or thirty-six hours. I'm not sure of that.
- 8Q When did you realize that you were going to make such a long mission?
- A Well, it's something that evolved from the mission itself. Possibly going back a little further to clarify the situation, I'll have to go back a couple of weeks. We had decided to go down to Africa and get some of our own probationary requirements as set forth in SAC Regulation 51-26. We are not subject to SAC Reg 50-8. That was approximately two weeks ago that we had planned the mission to Africa and at that time the special missions being flown by the 305th and 306th, I believe it was, were staging through Africa and the 43d Bomb Wing was restricted from using Sidi Slimane at that time. So approximately the 9th of November was the time this mission was originally planned. We weren't able to fly the mission at that time. We cancelled it out and set it up for last Tuesday, which was the 16th, to take off the 16th. No I requested that the mission be set up

EARHART

SECRET

4



for about Wednesday of the week before. The mission was confirmed and about Friday I had a call from Colonel Burchinal saying he would like to go down to Africa with us. Now Sunday I was in Cheltenham. I got back, I'd say, about 10:00 p.m.. As soon as I got on the Base I had a note that Colonel Burchinal wanted to see me.

9Q May I interrupt here?

A Yes, sir.

10Q When you have referred to this particular mission in your testimony in answer to my previous question, what duration mission are you referring to at this time before Colonel Burchinal contacted you on Sunday?

A Prior to that, sir, we were going down to Africa to accomplish a certain portion of our requirements on the trip down, fly possibly one mission down there and one mission back. We had three individual missions planned at that time.

11Q Of what duration — approximately?

A Eight to nine hours.

12Q Eight to nine hours each?

A Yes, sir. We actually hadn't gone into the mission planning phase. We were basing it on the requirements we had to accomplish at the time and estimated the number of missions it would require us to complete under SAC Reg No. 51-26.

13Q Then to clarify this further. You are speaking of a normal training mission that you had planned and scheduled previously, which didn't come about, rather than a long-duration type mission; is that correct?

A That is very true, sir. Yes, sir. It was, as I say, it wasn't one mission, it was possibly three missions on the supposition we couldn't even complete our requirements in two missions.

14Q Continue then. I believe you left off where Colonel Burchinal called you on Sunday.

A I called Colonel Burchinal at approximately 10:30 Sunday night and he requested that Major McCoy, the Stand Board Observer, and myself be in his office at eight o'clock Monday morning. Monday morning Colonel Burchinal again said he would like to go to Africa and told us to try to set up a noon takeoff on Tuesday and, if at all possible, he would like to try to make a takeoff there at noon Wednesday allowing us to fly a normal mission, get the requirements in in the African area, coming back to Fairford. If the weather conditions were not such that we could land we would return to Sidi or in the other event if the aircraft checked out satisfactorily enough, the weather conditions too, if the weather here at Fairford were unfavorable here at Fairford, if the aircraft wasn't in good condition, we would have to land and if the aircraft did check out satisfactorily we would try to extend the mission into the "Globe Trotter" mission, which is a 21-22 hour mission required.

15Q Are you actually required?

A Yes, sir.

EARNHART



SECRET

16Q To fly a "Globe Trotter" mission here?

A Here in England?

17Q Yes.

A Not to my knowledge, sir -- no. I believe Colonel Burchinal was primarily concerned with the information that we could gain for the benefit of the rest of the crews. I would like to say this -- that Colonel Burchinal probably does more flying than any staff officer I have known and is certainly well qualified and he's generally very eager to find out the problems his crews are up against. I have flown with him several times myself and in many cases he's always gone first before the mission ever started to determine the few points involved in the mission for the benefit of the crews.

18Q Then that was the reason for the mission?

A Yes, sir, it was to my knowledge. I don't know Colonel Burchinal's actual desire on it but my understanding on it was he would like to find out exactly what the crews would be up against on a "Globe Trotter" mission.

19Q At any time prior to takeoff, did you hear anyone talking, even hinting that you were going to try to break the record.

A To me, sir? No, sir; I did not. A further point of clarification there. We didn't even tell them we were going on a "Globe Trotter" mission. The best answer I have for that it is a lot easier to run a mission like that and tell them after rather than saying we're going out and do such a mission. You might have aircraft trouble and not complete the mission. That's my way of looking at the thing on a test like this. The 43d is a fairly new wing and still learning and we have many problems that we are still overcoming very rapidly. I would probably do the same thing. I'd rather find out if we can do it and then tell them and say we had completed the "Globe Trotter" mission with no problems whatsoever.

20Q At what point was the decision made to continue this flight past the "Globe Trotter" duration into a most unusually long mission? Do you recall just about when that was and the circumstances surrounding it?

A Yes, sir. I'm just thinking here a minute. Well, we left Fairford here -- now that was Thursday morning after we refueled because we completed the refueling in the vicinity of Lands' End and the weather at that time was very poor; however, they were able to get one tanker off. After we completed the refueling, we went back to Sidi, and I believe, the best I remember, it was in the Sidi vicinity that we still had two night celestial requirements to complete and --. We returned to Sidi at approximately four o'clock and approximately one hour and a half out of Sidi, I'd say, is where we made the decision that the airplane was in excellent condition and we still needed our two night celestials and we would, if at all possible, stay up and complete the two night celestials. The weather for Fairford the next day was forecast to be 500 and one by ten o'clock in the morning. As I said before, there was no aircraft trouble whatsoever. It was checking out beautifully and it was more or less of an

EARHART

SECRET



SECRET

- agreement between all of us, sir. I don't know what else to say — "let's stay up and get our night celestials in.
- 21Q Why didn't you land after your night celestials at Sidi?
- A Well, we wanted to get into Fairford if at all possible instead of Sidi and inasmuch as we'd flown that much time the few more additional hours to return to Fairford, considering the condition of the aircraft, was worth it — as far as I'm concerned anyway.
- 22Q Was the weather briefed to be good Friday?
- A Yes, sir, at 501 on that Friday.
- 23Q How was the crew?
- A In good condition, sir.
- 24Q Did you get any sleep?
- A I would say that during the duration of the flight I got about six hours. Colonel Burchinal got the same — six, seven hours — and that would probably go for the whole crew.
- 25Q Did you get plenty of sleep Sunday and Monday night?
- A Yes, sir; I did.
- 26Q What about the rest of the crew?
- A The same with the rest of the crew.
- 27Q When you say you got plenty of sleep, what do you mean in hours?
- A Eight to nine hours' sleep each night. I was in bed Sunday night at eleven o'clock and I was up at 7:15 and Major McCoy and Captain Franko were already in bed when I went into the hut.
- 28Q Did breaking the duration record of a B-47 have anything to do with your decision to finish your night celestials and return to Fairford on Friday?
- A Well, I can truthfully say on that, sir, it didn't enter the picture as far as I'm personally concerned. I don't think the subject was even mentioned and as I said before I knew that the 306th had flown an endurance of around thirty-five hours or whatever it maybe. However, the least of my desires are to go out and break a record.
- 29Q Do you have anything else to add — any pertinent remarks that you could make that would, in your estimation, further this investigation?
- A No, sir. I don't believe I have.

*Pat A. Earhart May*

EARHART

SECRET



Testimony of Owen J. McGonnell, Major, USAF, given to William B. Campbell, Colonel, USAF, investigating officer Headquarters 7th Air Division, APO 125, New York, New York at Headquarters 43rd Bombardment Wing, APO 129, New York, New York.

Having been duly sworn and advised of his rights under Article 31 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice the witness testified as follows:

1. Q Would you state your name, rank, serial number and particular position in the organization?  
A Owen J McGonnell, Major, 10088A, Chief of Maintenance, 43rd Bombardment Wing.
2. Q How long have you been Chief of Maintenance?  
A Since 15 October, this year.
3. Q How long have you been with 43rd Bombardment Wing?  
A Since September 1953, sir.
4. Q What previous jobs have you held with 43rd Bomb Wing?  
A Sir, Wing Comptroller, 64th Bombardment Squadron, 63rd Bomb Squadron Commander, Assistant to Chief of Maintenance, and my present job is Chief of Maintenance.
5. Q When did you arrive in United Kingdom?  
A Approximately 17 September, this year.
6. Q When did you learn that the Wing Commander planned to go to North Africa for this flight that departed Fairford on Tuesday, 16 November?  
A I knew on 13 November that the Wing Commander was going to Sidi Slimane.
7. Q What preparations did you make for this flight or perhaps you have made?  
A No preparations as such, sir, normal procedure for maintenance control is to schedule aircraft in commission. I was alerted on 13 November that the Wing Commander intended to go to Sidi Slimane and I was given the aircraft serial number in which he intended to fly.
8. Q Who gave you aircraft serial number?  
A The aircraft serial was determined during the regularly weekly SAC 60-9 meeting held the previous week. That may not have been the exact serial number, because we do make substitutions particularly during period of inclement weather.
9. Q At the SAC 60-9 meeting, you were given serial number of aircraft to participate in this flight?  
A Yes, sir, of the 60-9 meeting, I was aware of the intent to fly 062, the airplane in question. 062 was placed on schedule in anticipation of completing a dock test hop.
10. Q Had this airplane recently been through a period of inspection?  
A Yes, sir.
11. Q Then the flight to Sidi Slimane was the first flight after a periodic check with the exception of a test flight?  
A Yes, sir.
12. Q Were any unusual preparations made for this flight to North Africa, insofar as you know?  
A No, sir, the only thing out of ordinary was that on the date in question, I told the 65th Bombardment Squadron engineering officer that Colonel Burchinal intended to fly 062. The only reason I did



that is because we have had two aborts in the past on airplanes that the Colonel intended to fly.

13. Q Did the 65th Bombardment Squadron make any unusual or out of the ordinary preparation of this aircraft for this particular flight?

A Not to my knowledge, sir.

14. Q Then your overall schedule of flight time for this aircraft did not envisage seven hours or six hours flying to Sidi?

A Yes, sir, and a practice mission with the return trip.

15. Q At your SAC 60-9 meeting when this aircraft was scheduled or subsequent thereto but prior to takeoff on Tuesday, 16 November, how many hours did you plan for this aircraft to fly enroute to North Africa training and return to Fairford?

A My schedule called for approximately five to seven hours mission to Sidi and normally a five to seven hours mission is flown upon returning.

16. Q In other words, a total of approximately twelve to fourteen hours on aircraft prior to or upon returning to Fairford?

A Yes, sir.

17. Q Did you have any reason to feel that this particular mission to be any different than any others going to North Africa?

A No, sir.

18. Q Have you ever heard of mission Globe Trotter?

A No, sir.

19. Q What were the maintenance schedule, what condition is 062 upon landing gear flight on 19 November?

A The part two of the AF Form 1 indicated the aft-gear had to be elgd down, the flasher lights were inoperative, one booster in one of the main fuel tanks was inoperative, the slew switch on the tracking handle needed adjustment and one of the inverters was inoperative.

20. Q The condition of aircraft flying approximately forty-seven hours compare with condition of aircraft in normal training insofar as your able to account?

A Approximately the same, sir. If it was not mandatory to conduct a post flight inspection the aircraft could have flown immediately upon refueling and reservicing.

21. Q Major McGonnell, do you have any further comments or pertinent information which will enable me better to ascertain the circumstances surrounding the flight of approximately forty-seven hours?

A No, sir, I do not. However, I have a preliminary report on the condition of the aircraft that may be of interest to you in the conduct of this investigation. Of primary importance to me was the amount of engine oil consumed by engines. The amounts are as follow: Number 1 - 12 qts; number 2 - 12 1/4 qts; number 3 - 13 qts; number 4 - 15 3/4 qts; number 5 - 10 qts; number 6 - 11 qts. The total capacity of each oil reservoir is, as you know, 9.4 gallons.

22. Q May I have a copy of the report which you have mentioned for this investigation?

A Yes, sir.

23. Q Do you have anything else to offer?

A No, sir.

*August M. McConnell*



SECRET

TESTIMONY OF CAPTAIN MARVIN E. WILLIAMS, USAF

Given to William B. Campbell, Colonel, USAF, Investigating Officer, Headquarters, 7th Air Division, APO 125, New York, New York, at Headquarters, 3919th Air Base Group, APO 129, New York, New York, 20 November 1954.

Having been duly sworn and advised of his rights under Article 31 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice, the witness testified as follows:

- 1Q Would you state your name, your rank, your serial number and your duty within the 43d Bomb Wing?
- A Marvin E. Williams, Captain, A0520109.
- 2Q What is your job in the 43d Bomb Wing?
- A Flight-line Maintenance Officer, 565.
- 3Q Is aircraft number 52062 in your squadron?
- A Yes, sir.
- 4Q That aircraft was prepared for a flight for Colonel Burchinal, the Wing Commander, was it not, this past week?
- A Right. Yes, sir.
- 5Q When did you have knowledge this aircraft was going to make a mission to North Africa? It left on Tuesday, the 16th of November, to refresh your memory.
- A Well, sir, I don't remember the exact --. We usually plan our flights a week ahead of time as far as our weekly schedules are concerned, but I don't remember whether this --. We have to switch a lot of airplanes, sometimes, due to some of them being in commission and out of commission. It was just scheduled on a normal flight.
- 6Q Say a couple, three days in advance?
- A Yes, usually we have to shift them.
- 7Q Was there to be anything unusual about this flight as far as you know?
- A No, sir -- just a routine flight.
- 8Q It was just a routine flight to North Africa as far as you were concerned?
- A Yes, sir.
- 9Q Did you put any extraordinary items aboard this aircraft for this flight?
- A No, sir.
- 10Q Or did any of your people to your recollection?
- A Not to my knowledge, sir.
- 11Q Have you or your people examined this airplane since the flight?
- A Both my people and the Maintenance Control people.
- 12Q And how have you found it -- in what condition?
- A I would say very good condition.
- 13Q As compared to aircraft having flown a normal duration mission?
- A Yes, sir, very comparable. Nothing out of the way about it at all.
- 14Q Is there anything that you might offer that would help me as an investigating officer in determining all the circumstances with regard to this flight?

WILLIAMS

SECRET



SECRET

- A I don't know of anything I can tell you, sir. As far as I know it was just a regular scheduled mission.
- 15Q Were you surprised when you heard that some place along the line that it was of unusual duration?
- A Yes, sir.
- 16Q When did you hear this?
- A Oh, let's see. It was some time, I'd say, Wednesday evening before I heard anything about it. We always from Federal Control get a departure time on our aircraft down there and we get to expecting them when they ought to be due in.
- 17Q Do you remember when it was due in?
- A No, I don't remember. We didn't get an ETA on them. We just got a departure on them.
- 18Q I have nothing further. You have nothing further to offer, do you?
- A No, sir.

WILLIAMS

SECRET